

Joint Task Force-Bravo

Soto Cano AB, Honduras



Welcome Guide



Clockwise from top: 1) New members of Joint Task Force-Bravo arrive on the Freedom Bird and board a bus on the flightline. 2) An Air Force firefighter trains a soldier from a Central American country how to combat brush fires during a multinational training exercise. 3) A medic calls in a medevac helicopter during a training exercise.



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Section I

History, Mission & Vision of Joint Task Force-Bravo

History

U.S. and Honduran forces conducted combined training exercises as early as 1965. In 1983, the Honduran government requested an increase in the size and number of those exercises. Joint Task Force-Bravo was established in August 1984 to exercise command and control of U.S. Forces and exercises in the Republic of Honduras. It is a subordinate command of the United States Southern Command (USSOUTH-COM). Before being designated JTF-Bravo in 1984, this task force was known as JTF-11 and then as JTF-Alpha. A historical timeline of the base follows:

1982 — Palmerola Air Base constructed

1983 — Joint Task Force-11 established

– Redesignated as JTF-Alpha

1984 — JTF-Alpha redesignated as JTF-Bravo

– Deter Nicaraguan aggression (2000+ personnel)

– Provide command and control of U.S. military forces deployed to Joint Operations Area

1992-1994 — Transitional period (1130 personnel)

– Bilateral humanitarian and civil assistance operations

1995 — Downsizing/Reorganization (710 personnel)

1996 — Revised OPORD Central Champs (499 personnel)

1997 — CINC's Theater Engagement plan issued, calling for Soto Cano to serve as strategic gateway to the theater

1999 — 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment assigned as a tenant unit

JTF-Bravo Mission

Prior to 1995, JTF-Bravo's primary mission was to provide command and control, administrative, and logistical support for exercises, deployments, and humanitarian and civic assistance projects conducted in the Republic of Honduras. Today, JTF-Bravo's primary mission is to support and conduct joint, combined and interagency operations in the Joint Operations Area, to enhance regional cooper-



Visitors to Joint Task Force-Bravo's command section are greeted with a display of flags representing the Central American countries that are within its area of responsibility.

ative security initiatives, and support democratic development. JTF-Bravo supports U.S. interests in Central America through:

- Building regional cooperative security — Developing cooperative security arrangements and confidence building measures between neighbors that contribute to reduce regional tensions;
- Developing military roles and missions for the 21st century — Supporting Latin American armed forces as they develop appropriate force structures and doctrine, and demonstrate support for human rights and subordination to civilian authority;
- Supporting the National Counterdrug Strategy — Supporting counterdrug efforts and programs of U.S. law enforcement agencies and regional allies;
- Exercising combined forces — JTF-Bravo normally supports three to five large exercises a year that are directed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. JTF-Bravo also annually supports about 45 smaller exercises called Deployments for Training or Overseas Deployments for Training.



JTF-Bravo does not train or advise the Honduran Armed Forces.

JTF-Bravo Vision

- Acts as CINC's agent to promote multinational cooperation in JOA;
 - Positive interaction through combined exercises, conferences and operations;
- Supporting command in the region for U.S. MILGROUP commanders;
 - Assist humanitarian and civic assistance planning and execution;
 - Provide disaster relief, search and rescue, medevac support, and assistance for interagency counterdrug operations;
 - Interagency support and media coverage to demonstrate U.S. commitment to region.
- Provide strategic flexibility for USSOUTHCOM regional engagement.

Section II

JTF-Bravo Subordinate Commands & Tenant Units

Army Forces (ARFOR)

- **Mission:** Army Forces exercises command control and provides administrative and logistical support for JTF-Bravo elements and other Army or joint operations conducted to enhance regional engagement and cooperative security in the joint area of operations.
- **Description:** Joint Task Force Bravo's Army Forces is commanded by an Army lieutenant colonel. ARFOR consists of a headquarters and support company, a finance section and the ARFOR staff.
- HSC conducts water purification, fueling and ammunition-handling operations. Its rigger section provides support for airborne operations.
- The finance section provides pay support to personnel on Soto Cano Air Base. The office is manned by five soldiers and three civilians and not only handles travel vouchers and pay problems, but also maintains an ATM that allows personnel to withdraw cash and check their account balances at all hours.



Costa Rican narco cops rappel from a UH-60 Blackhawk during a Central Skies mission in Puerto Limon, Costa Rica.

- The ARFOR staff includes personnel, intelligence, operations and logistics. ARFOR is involved in supporting everything that JTF-Bravo does. Typical activities include monthly combined airborne operations, multinational support for counterdrug operations, support for medical readiness training exercises, and training for search and rescue, disaster relief, humanitarian assistance and force protection missions.

Air Force Forces (AFFOR)

- Joint Task Force Bravo's Air Force Forces are composed of 188 personnel assigned to the 612th Air Base Squadron for a year-long, unaccompanied remote assignment. The AFFOR provides all airfield operations support and administrative personnel support. In addition, quite a few Air Force personnel serve in joint

matters and work on the JTF-Bravo joint staff and Joint Security Forces.

- **Vision:** A unified team, AFFOR provides air operations support to the joint and coalition forces engaged in joint and combined operations to enhance Central American cooperative security and regional stability.

- **Mission:** Serve as the air component to JTF-Bravo providing air base support including logistics, air traffic control, base civil engineering, fire department, personnel support and joint matters. AFFOR maintains Soto Cano AB as the strategic launch pad in Central America for U.S. Southern Command's strategy, disaster relief, civic and humanitarian assistance and counterdrug operations in the six-country Joint Operations Area.

- **Goals:** AFFOR maintains and improves airfield capabilities to meet expanding JTF-Bravo mission requirements

- Provide safe working and living conditions and improve quality of life;

- Foster a cooperative relationship with our Honduran hosts;

- Cultivate an environment that promotes empowerment, teamwork and continuous improvement.

Joint Security Force (JSF)

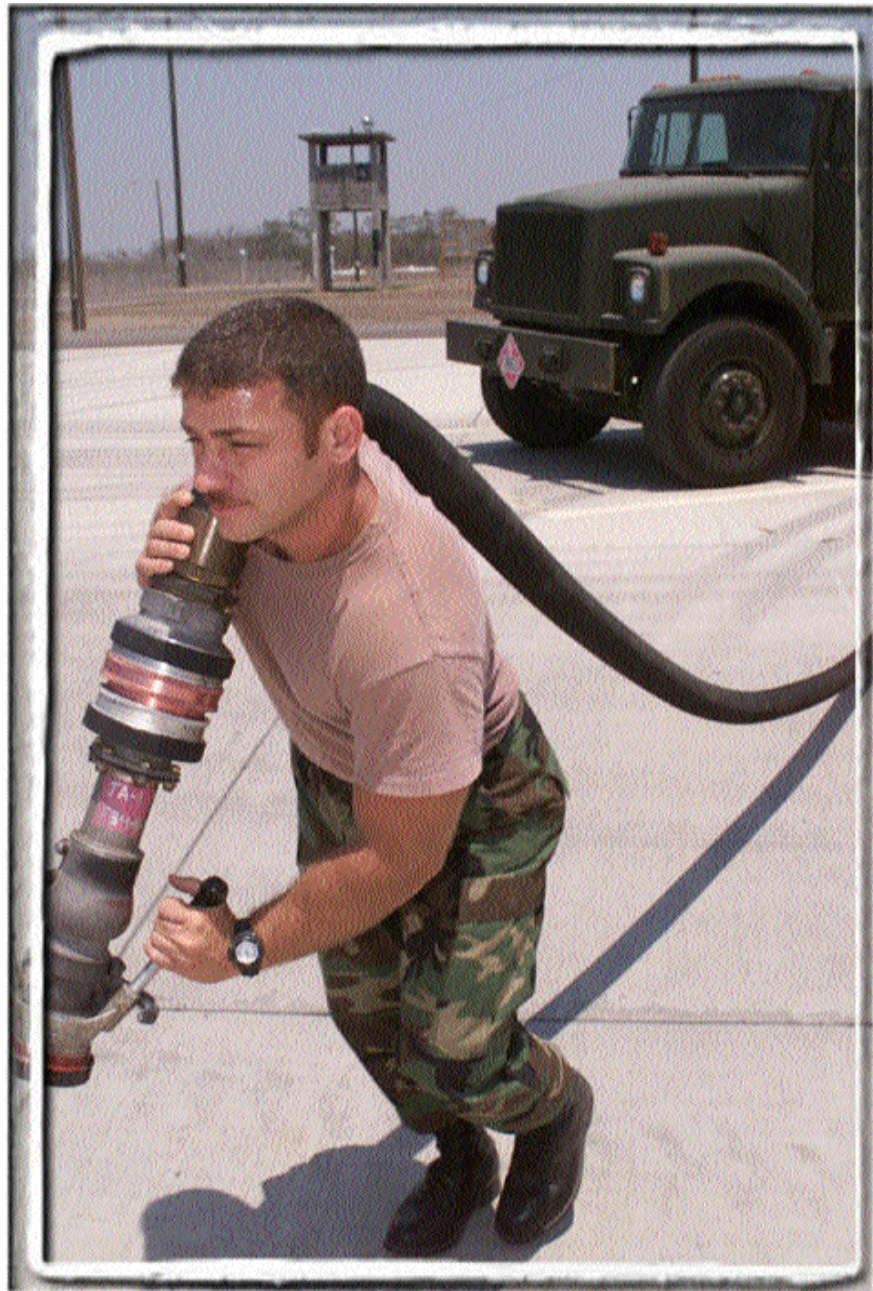
- Joint Security Forces provides uninterrupted law enforcement and security in support of JTF-Bravo personnel, facilities and equipment;

- They maintain liaison with U.S. government and host nation law enforcement agencies;

- JSF supports operations as directed by the JTF-Bravo commander.

Medical Element (MEDEL)

- The Medical Element provides emergency and limited routine health care for U.S. forces stationed and



An Air Force fuels technician drags a hose out to an aircraft that needs to be gassed up.

training in Honduras and eligible beneficiaries;

- MEDEL provides emergency medical care in order to preserve life, limb and vision;

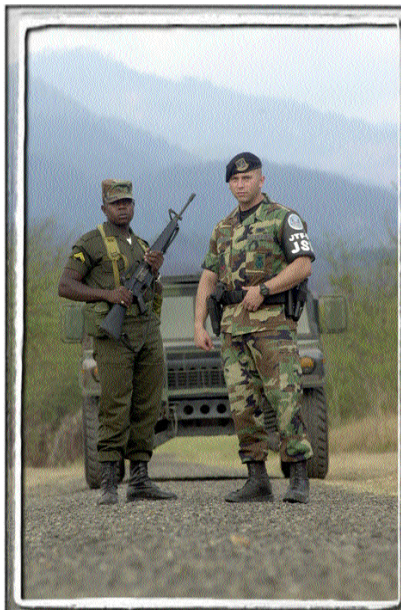
- Conducts humanitarian and civic assistance operations through Medical Readiness Training Exercises in order to enhance U.S. and Central American relations;

- Works with the Honduran Ministry of Health and Armed Forces to provide care to indigent and sick Hondurans;

- Supports U.S. military specialty team visits from



Healthcare professionals from Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, conduct an ear, nose and throat medical readiness training exercise (MEDRETE) in San Pedro Sula, Honduras' industrial and economic capital.



A Honduran soldier and an Air Force security forces' member conduct a joint patrol around the perimeter of Soto Cano AB.

the states each year, to include plastic surgeons, ear, nose and throat teams, and ophthalmologists.

1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment (1-228th)

• A tenant unit of Soto Cano Air Base, the 1-228th falls under U.S. Army South, located at Ft. Buchanan, Puerto Rico.

- 1-228th is a composite battalion composed of the "Talons" (12 UH-60s), the "Sugar-bears" (four CH-47s), a MEDEVAC detachment (five UH-60s) and the Phantoms Two "Talon" aircraft.

- 1-228th supports the U.S. SOUTHCOM theater of operations in Central and South America. Most missions involve counterdrug, humanitarian assistance and distinguished visitor air movement in support of JTF-Bravo.

- As the only U.S. SOUTHCOM Army aviation unit, the 1-228th is responsible for the command and control of all organic and attached Army aviation in the theater.

A trio of UH-60 Blackhawks from the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment fly in formation over a lush, triple-canopy jungle while on a Central Skies counterdrug operation in Costa Rica.



Section III

Your New Home

Soto Cano Air Base

- Soto Cano is a Honduran military installation and home of the Honduran Air Force and Honduran Naval Academy.
- It is located less than 10 miles from Comayagua (population: 33,000), and 60 miles from the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa.
- The base is about two miles wide and six miles long; lies in the Comayagua Valley and is ringed by 8,000-foot mountain peaks to the east and west.
- Soto Cano sits at an elevation of 2,062 feet above sea level.

Getting to Soto Cano

- Most personnel arrive via the “Freedom Bird,” which conducts weekly flights from Charleston AFB, S.C., normally on Mondays, that fly directly into Soto Cano.
- Personnel arriving by commercial air into Tegucigalpa will make the 1.5 hour drive to Soto Cano by catching the daily shuttle bus, which departs from the Tegucigalpa airport between noon and 2 p.m.

- Soldiers who don’t make this connection are encouraged to stay overnight at the “White House (La Casa Blanca), a safe house in Tegucigalpa which is run by JTF-Bravo’s liaison office to the Embassy. It is located at Colonia Loma Linda Norte, #299, Avenida F.A.O. You can take a taxi from the airport for a nominal fee. If an emergency arises, you can call the military liaison at 232-0712 for assistance. The White House is not a hotel, so bring appropriate toiletries and a towel.

Facilities

- Soto Cano lodging consists of “hooches” and metal barracks.
- Hooches are temporary wooden buildings of tropical design, normally 16-feet by 32-feet with screened windows and a tin roof with air conditioners and fans for cooling.
- Metal barracks are more permanent structures and have air conditioners. Both contain beds, televisions, VCRs, refrigerators and microwaves.
- Latrines, shower facilities and laundry rooms are centrally located to the living areas.
- Dayrooms, volleyball courts, barbecues and “bohios” (covered picnic areas) are also located throughout the base.



Section IV

Dress & Appearance

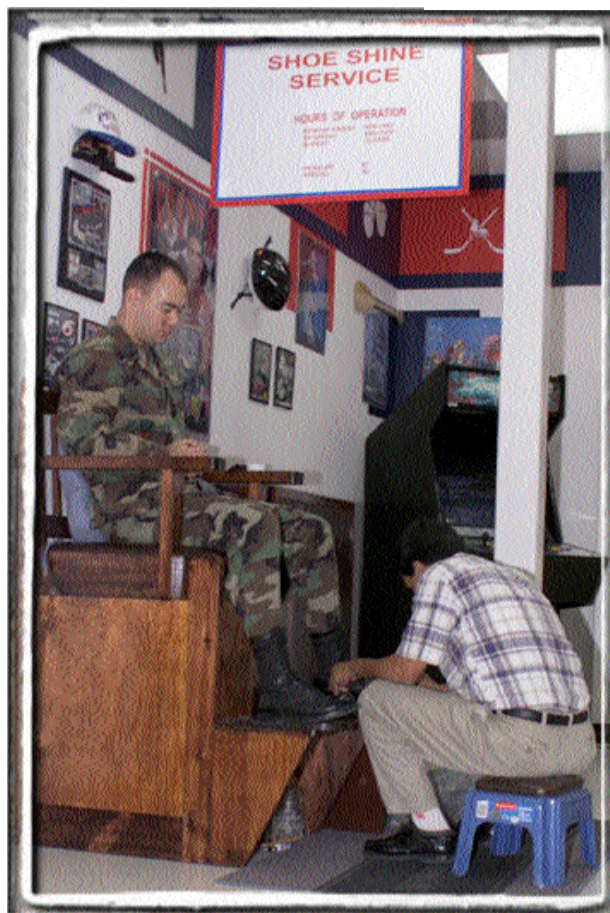
- Service regulations governing standards of uniform wear and appearance will be followed.

Uniform Wear

- Battle dress uniform is the duty uniform.
- Aviators/service members whose duties involve flight operations will wear flight suits.
- Bring service dress and mess dress uniforms for special occasions.



Soto Cano residents live in either wooden “hoochs” like the one seen above or in metal dormitories.



AAFES offers two barber shops, a shoeshine service, an exchange, theater, and a food court featuring Frank's Franks, Anthony's Pizza and Robin Hood.

Wearing of Civilian Clothing

On Soto Cano AB

- Clothing will reflect good taste and decency.
- Attire with sexual or demeaning messages, logos or drawings will not be worn.

Off Base in Central America

- Civilian clothing is the rule of thumb.
- Appearance must create a favorable impression.
- Men must wear shirts with sleeves, but collared shirts are not required.
- Wear of headgear for sun protection is recommended; however, rag-type covers and bandannas will not be worn.
- Wear civilian clothing while traveling on civilian air in the USSOUTHCOM theater of operations.

General Guidelines

- All DOD employees must always carry their ID cards at all times.
- Dog tags must be worn in uniform or while flying.
- Men will not wear earrings or any other body-piercing jewelry in Honduras. Earrings are the only type of body piercing allowed for women in Honduras.
- Headgear will not be worn around aircraft or helicopters preparing to take off or landing.



Section V

Equipment & items to Bring

Army Forces

- Kevlar helmet with cover
- T-shirt, brown – 10 each
- One set of LBE
- Boot socks – 10 each *
- 1 Qt. Canteen – 2 each
- Mosquito netting
- Ammo pouches – 2 each
- Sleeping bag or poncho liner
- Wet weather gear *
- Shaving kit/toiletries (including soapdish) *
- Bath towels and washcloths *
- BDU uniforms – 4 each (summer weight) *
- Shoe shining kit *
- Watch and alarm clock (battery operated) *
- BDU hat – 2 each *
- Underwear – 10 each *
- Boots – 2 pair (jungle boots recommended) *



Patrons receive haircuts in the exchange's main barber & beauty shop, where prices are quite reasonable.

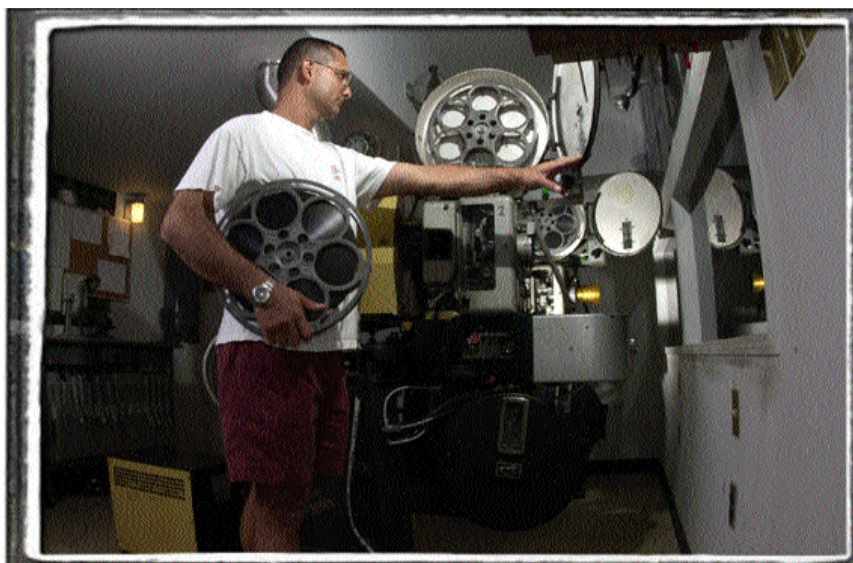
- Shower shoes *
- PT uniforms – 3 sets *
- Running shoes *
- Class Bs with 2 sets of rank
- Have home unit security manager fax clearance information to J-2 at DSN 449-4126

Air Force Forces

- Common necessities listed above (*)
- T-shirt, black or brown – 10 each
- Although the battle dress uniform is the normal uniform of the day, all required uniforms should be brought, including the service dress uniform.
- Personal physical training gear
- Contact the AFFOR orderly room at DSN 449-4314.

1-228th

- All inbound soldiers are encouraged to contact the Battalion S-1 as soon as they receive an RFO at DSN 449-4306 for a full list of what to bring.
- Civilian clothing in good repair
- Camera
- Sports clothing and equipment
- Personal locks



A member of the local Air Force Enlisted Association changes the reels of a movie at the base theater. The organization runs theater operations.



- Cooking utensils
- Stereo

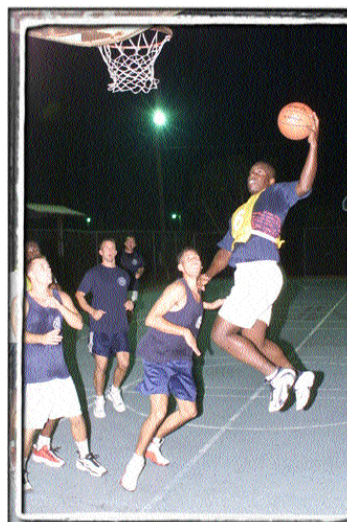
Note: Prior to deploying, contact the office to which you are assigned to determine if any changes to this list have been made.

Section VI

Preparing for Arrival

General Information

- Before departing for Soto Cano, visit your local preventive medicine office.
- You should have current immunizations including Tetanus-Diphtheria, Yellow Fever, Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and PPD within the last year.
- Malaria pills (Chloroquine) should be taken weekly starting two weeks prior to arrival. Additional pills can be obtained from the Soto Cano pharmacy after arrival.
- Women need a current GYN exam.
- Passports (official preferred) are a requirement.



Soto Cano has an outdoor basketball court, tennis court, pool and sports fields.

- Prescribed medication for duration of tour. The MEDEL Pharmacy, while stocking a variety of medications, is limited in scope. Usually, only one or two of a particular class of drug is included in its formulary. Supply system limitation often result in lengthy delays in obtaining new stock. Therefore, the pharmacy recommends that patients on long-term prescription medications deploy with enough medication to last through their stay. Alternatively, inquire at your home station about the “mail-order” pharmacy.



The University of Maryland University College offers several night classes each semester, while other students take college courses on-line.

The base offers personnel many activities to occupy their time after duty hours. One of the most popular facilities on Soto Cano is the base's woodshop, where craftsmen can make furniture with Honduras' world-famous mahogany.



ARMY Forces

- Personnel transactions will be processed through the ARFOR personnel accounting center.
 - Members will initiate personnel actions through their respective orderly rooms.
 - Members must hand carry the following:
 - Immunization Record
 - SGLI Option form
- Legible copy of DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data
- Forms 2 and 2-1



If woodworking isn't your thing, you can give the base's wicker and hammock shop a try.

- ORB (officers)
- DA Form 873, Certificate of Clearance
- Two copies of deployment orders
- Copy of latest OER/NCOER
- Valid civilian driver's license

AIR FORCE Forces

- Personnel transactions will be processed through the mission support flight orderly room.
- Members must hand carry the following:
 - OJT records (E-6 and below)
 - Immunization Record
 - 10 copies of PCS orders for processing
 - Weight management case file
 - Legible copy of DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data
 - AF Form 330, the transmittal document that accounts for all required items
 - AF Form 522, Weapons Qualification Card (if applicable)
 - Passport (official preferred), Medical and Dental Records, Family Support Record (for joint spouse with dependents)
- Valid civilian driver's license



If you're going to enjoy your tour in Honduras, you must go out and explore the country. You can dine at a fine restaurant in nearby Comayagua, tour the lost Mayan ruins in Copan or scuba dive off the Bay Islands.

- Identification (dog) tags

1-228th Aviation Regiment

- Personnel transactions will be processed through the PAC, 1-228th.
- SGLI, DEERS, Forms 2 and 2-1, ORB, allotments, etc. will be taken care of by 1-228.
- Members must hand carry a copy of their latest OER/NCOER.

MEDEL

- First priority is to get your official U.S. passport. Start the process as soon as you know you are going to Honduras. Do not wait for official orders.
- Make sure your orders state that excess baggage is authorized and hold-baggage is authorized, and that the per diem rate is \$11.50 per day.
- Fax a copy of your orders and itinerary to the Personnel Accounting Center at DSN 449-4600/4376.
- For doctors, dentists, physician assistants and nurse anesthetists, at least 60 days prior to arrival, fax a

copy of the Transfer Brief, Delineation of Privileges, current license, MD diploma and any specialty diplomas to the Medical Element credentials section at DSN 449-4376, ATTN: Ms. Emilia Torres. The Honduran Ministry of Health requires these documents for the



A soldier signs up for a Honduran getaway weekend at MWR's Tours & Travel office.



granting of provider privileges.

MEDEL personnel should also bring the following items:

- Shot record and medical record
- PT card and weapons qualification card (9mm and/or M-16)
- Most recent OER or NCOER
- Copy of ORB for officers or DA 2A2-1 for enlisted soldiers
- SGLI copy
- DD Form 93, emergency notification card
- CPR/BCLS certification
- RN or LPN license
- Military ID card and Geneva Convention card
- Two sets of dog tags
- 15 copies of TDY orders
- Civilian driver's license
- Professional reference materials, books or any other equipment you think you might need.

If MEDEL personnel have problems with the issuing of TDY orders, they should have their personnel accounting center call the MEDEL's PAC at DSN 449-4291 or 4262.

JSF

Personnel assigned to the Joint Security Forces will receive processing requirements before departure.

Section VII

Base services

Members of the Army Forces compete in a tug of war contest during one of Joint Task Force-Bravo's organization days. "Org Day," as it is called, pits teams from the base's subordinate commands and tenant units against each other in sporting events.



Finance

- The finance office cashier's window is open Monday through Friday, except Wednesday, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., for check cashing and purchasing *lempiras*, the Honduran currency.
- Personal checks, U.S. Treasury checks or money orders can be cashed by active-duty military members for up to \$150 per week.
- Reservists may cash checks for up to \$50 per week.
- U.S. dollars are used in most on-base facilities. Although dollars are accepted at many off-base establishments in the local area, lempiras are preferred.
- Base personnel may exchange dollars for lempiras at several locations: the finance office, base exchange or at the U.S. Embassy located in Tegucigalpa.
- Currency black-marketing is illegal and is investigated by the CID.

Command Judge Advocate

- The legal office is located in Bldg. 1-61 and open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Anyone wishing to speak to an attorney must call for an appointment at DSN 449-4154, 4546 or 4652.
- Available services include: power of attorneys and wills; legal classes; translations and notarizations; tax assistance; "hooch" maid contracts; and claims for lost or damaged personal property.

Dining Facility

- All military members TDY to JTF-Bravo receive per diem, and must pay the applicable surcharges:
 - Breakfast: \$1.60 (\$1.30 for PCS)
 - Lunch: \$3.20 (\$2.65 for PCS)
 - Dinner: \$3.20 (\$2.65 for PCS)
- Meal hours are:**
 - Monday through Friday
 - **Breakfast:** 6 to 8:30 a.m.
 - **Lunch:** 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
 - **Dinner:** 5 to 6:30 p.m.
 - On Saturdays, breakfast is served from 6:30 to 9:30



On weekends, many head to Lake Yojoa for R&R. MWR maintains a marina at the fresh-water lake, where ski and fishing boats can be rented by personnel, who pay only for the gas.

a.m. On Sundays, breakfast is served from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Transportation

- The transportation office arranges airline tickets for Air Mobility Command or commercial carrier.
- All members on extended TDY and PCS are authorized shipment of unaccompanied baggage.
- Authorization must be annotated on original TDY orders.
- Weight allowances are dependent on rank.
- Travel to and from Honduras will be made by Air Mobility Command or commercial air.

Joint Personal Property Shipping Office

Inprocessing

- JPPSO is located in Bldg. K-80B and is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Saturday deliveries are available from 8 a.m. to noon.
- Incoming personnel with personal property ship-

ments need to inprocess through JPPSO. You must give your name, building number and phone number. This information is needed to contact you when your shipment arrives. Your name will be posted at the JPPSO office once you have inprocessed, and it will indicate amount of boxes or crates, required delivery date and arrival date of your shipment. Once your shipment has arrived, you will be contacted to arrange for delivery. You will be required to be available from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. A JPPSO representative will be present during your delivery in case of questions.

- If you have losses or damages to your shipment, you may file a claim. You must file with the legal office, located in building A-61, ext. 4154, within 70 days of receipt of shipment. You will need all the shipping documents as well as DD Form 1840, which you can get from JPPSO.

Outprocessing

- Packout time is between 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Please do not call the JPPSO for an exact time. JPPSO does not do packouts on weekends.
- Personnel shipping household goods and unac-



The base's dining facility offers a wide variety of fare that will satisfy anyone's palate.

companied baggage must make a appointment 30 days prior to departure. Visit JPPSO with 10 copies of your orders to arrange for a pick-up date. Your orders must authorize shipment of goods or baggage prior to making arrangements for pick-up. If your orders do not authorize shipment, you must contact your home unit for amendments. Your orders can not be amended here.

- You must fill out DD Form 1701 inventory form, and return it to JPPSO prior to the packout date to enable the packers to bring proper size boxes and crates. A schedule will be posted with packouts for the following week with name, building number and date/time of packout.

- Any wicker or wood products you have built or



Base personnel also can eat at the food court or at one of privately run Honduran establishments on base.

brought here must be dry, not green, and free of dirt and termites. If you have received items off the installation, you may want to check with JPPSO to see if it is infected and needs to be fumigated.

- When scheduling your packout, ensure you list all items on DD Form 1701 and notify the clerk of any outsized pieces you may have that require special packing or crating.

- It's recommended that you do not ship TA/50 mobility gear with your shipments. Household goods and unaccompanied baggage do take a certain amount of travel time, and there's always the possibility of delayed or lost shipments.



The base library offers Internet access and free paperbacks to personnel.

Base Chapel

- The Base Chapel is in Bldg. N-65. Three congregations meet regularly at the chapel for worship services:

— Sunday

Catholic Mass 8:15 a.m.

Protestant Service 11 a.m.

Gospel Service 1 p.m.

— Wednesday

Catholic Mass noon

— Saturday

Catholic Mass, 4:30 p.m.

- Bible classes, various denominational worship services, seasonal worship services, social activities, spiri-



One of the most famous landmarks in nearby Comayagua is the Cathedral, located in the town's Central Park.

tual hikes, cookouts and other activities are planned by the chapel, depending on the community's need and the season.

- The chapel program is not intended to replace your home pastor or congregation, but provides members with an opportunity for worship while they are stationed at Soto Cano and living in Honduras.

Mail Services

- Postal services include stamps, money orders and package mailing.

- No personal checks or travelers checks are accepted as payment.

- Only U.S. Postal Service money orders will be cashed.

Mailing address:

Rank, Name

PSC 42, Box # (or General Delivery)

APO AA 34042

Contacting the Base by Telephone

- DSN from CONUS area: 449-4000/1/2
- From non-CONUS area: (312) 449-4000/1/2

- From a commercial U.S. telephone call: 011 (504) 234-4634

Laundry Services

- Base services operates an on-base laundry service, which includes uniform pressing and dry cleaning.

Morale, Welfare and Recreation Services

- Recreation Center
- MWR Tours and Travel
- Basic, advanced and rescue scuba certification
- Ski boats and skis, pontoon boats and fishing equipment available at Lake Yojoa
- The Oasis Club, an all-ranks club
- Basketball and tennis courts
- Sport equipment, 30 bicycles, ice chests and other equipment available for sign out
- Musical equipment at the Oasis Club
- Outdoor swimming pool
- Racquetball courts
- Sports fields
- Wood shop
- Wicker furniture building



- Hammock shop
- Fitness center
- Library
- Theater

Other Activities

- Social clubs
- Base education center
- Armed Forces Radio
- Cable television
- AAFES
- Chapel programs

Section VIII

Honduras background information

Area

• Central America, bordering the Caribbean Sea, between Guatemala and Nicaragua, and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between El Salvador and Nicaragua

- *Total area:* 43,270 sq. mi.
- *Comparative area:* About the size of Louisiana

Climate

- Sub-tropical in low lands, temperate in mountains
- Rainy Season (from May to October); minimum/maximum temperature ranges 60/90 degrees
- Dry Season (from November to April); minimum/maximum temperature ranges 55/95 degrees

Government

- *Diagraph:* HO
- *Type:* Republic
- *Capital:* Tegucigalpa (pop. 850,000)
- *Administrative Divisions:* 18 Departments
- *Independence:* Sep. 15, 1821 (from Spain)
- *Constitution:* Jan. 11, 1982; effective Jan. 20, 1982
- *Flag:* Three equal horizontal bands of blue (top), white and blue with five blue five-pointed stars arranged in an "X" pattern centered in the white band. The stars represent the members of the former Federal Republic of Central America: Costa



Airmen feed children in one of two orphanages supported by the Air Force Forces. Task force members dedicate many hours helping those less fortunate.



A soldier from the Medical Element examines a girl in El Encinal, a coffee-farming village in the mountains near the base. Soldiers and airmen were spending off-duty time helping the farmers build a new church for their community. Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Economy

- Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere.
- *Agriculture*: The most important sector of the country's economy, agriculture accounts for more than 25 percent of the gross domestic product, employs 62 percent of the labor force and produces two-thirds of exports.
- *Industry*: Still in its early stages, employs nearly nine percent of the labor force, accounts for 50 percent of gross domestic product and generates 20 percent of exports.
- *Service Sectors*: Includes Public Administration, accounts for 25 percent of the GDP and employs nearly 20 percent of the labor force
- Basic problems facing the economy include rapid population growth, high unemployment, a lack of basic services, a large and inefficient public sector and the dependence of exports, mostly coffee

Armed Forces

- *Branches*: Army, Navy (including Marines), Air Force, Public Security Forces (FUSEP)
- *Defense expenditures*: About one percent of the gross domestic product

People

- *Population*: 6 million (1998 estimate)
- *Life expectancy at birth*: 67.17 years; male 64.82; female 69.62
- *Ethnic Divisions*: Mestizo (mixed Indian and European) 90 percent; Indian, seven percent; Black, two percent; White, one percent.
- *Religions*: Roman Catholic, 97 percent; Protestant minority
- *Languages*: Spanish and Indian dialects
- *Literacy*: About 80 percent age 15 and over can read and write (1998)